

Madison County Department of Emergency Medical Services



Standard Operating Guideline

Title	Bystander Physician Assistance
Number	046
Adoption Date	8/5/2008
Revision Date	
Approved by	Lewis Jenkins, EMS Director



Purpose:

This policy outlines the steps to be followed when a bystander physician identifies him/herself as a physician and offers their assistance at the scene of an injury or illness. If he/she's help is needed or utilized, then the following guideline should be followed. The EMS provider always reserves the right to decline any help that is offered, for any reason, unless medical command has ordered that patient care be relinquished to the bystander physician.

Policy:

If the bystander physician is not an EMS physician affiliated with either Madison County EMS (MEMS), Madison County Rescue Squad (MCRS), or the Thomas Jefferson Emergency Medical Services Council (TJEMS) Medical Direction committee, then the EMS provider shall determine if such assistance:

- Will be necessary for patient care;
- Will be beneficial for the patient;
- Will not delay transport to the hospital or significantly interrupt the flow of patient care.

If the EMS provider determines assistance is needed by ensuring that all three of the above conditions are met, then one of the following options should be followed. It is important to thank the bystander physician for his/her offer of assistance and to remain as courteous as possible at all times. Consider having the Duty Officer respond to the scene.

- Option 1. If he/she only wishes to provide assistance as another pair of eyes, hands, or to offer suggestions, then the MEMS medical protocols will be strictly followed.
- Option 2. If he/she wishes to offer advice to alter the standing or Medical Command order, while still maintaining care within the MEMS protocol/scope of practice, then Medical Command should be contacted for the physicians to speak directly with one another.
- Option 3. If he/she wishes to make the patient treatment decisions completely and/or perform a treatment that is not within the scope of the MEMS medical protocols, while still maintaining patient care in a Madison County ambulance, then Medical Command must be contacted. The bystander physician will take full responsibility for all treatments/procedures provided, while physically accompanying the patient and crew to the hospital until transfer of care has occurred. As a licensed physician, he/she must sign and document on the MEMS PPCR for ALL instructions

and treatments provided.

If the bystander physician chooses option 2 or 3, then the EMS provider shall request to see his/her medical license, unless the bystander physician is known to the EMS provider. Medical Command will choose one of the following solutions:

- Request that the bystander physician not play any role in patient care
- Request that the bystander physician function in an observer capacity only
- Retain medical control of the patient but consider the suggestions offered by the bystander physician
- Delegate full medical control of the patient to the bystander physician

If the bystander physician is delegated full medical control of the patient, the EMS provider shall:

- Make ALS equipment and supplies available to the physician and offer any assistance necessary;
- Ensure that the physician accompanies the patient to the receiving hospital in the ambulance;
- Keep receiving facility/Medical Command advised of the patient's status;
- Ensure that adequate patient care documentation is completed, obtaining both the signatures of the bystander and medical command physician.